

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-40. (Canceled)

41. (Currently Amended) A test strip comprising a flexible flat support on which one or several test fields are arranged next to one another, wherein said test fields carry one or several detection layers stacked on top of one another and wherein the ~~test fields are covered~~ detection layers are directly contacted by an overlay made of a spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, ~~and wherein the overlay material is provided with liquid conducting capacity selected to obviate excess sample from the detection layer.~~

42. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 41 wherein the overlay comprises one or several flat overlay elements which are attached to the test strip in such a way that a part of their surface can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface when the test strip is bent towards a side on which the overlay is located.

43. (Currently Amended) The test strip of claim 42 wherein the ~~test fields~~ detection layers are covered by the parts of the overlay elements that can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface.

44. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 42 wherein the overlay comprises two overlay elements whose parts that can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface face one another and overlap.

45. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 44 wherein the overlap covers two test fields.

46. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 41 wherein the test strip comprises two single or multilayer test fields for the same or different diagnostically usable analytes, said test fields directly adjoining one another or being separated by a gap.

47. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 41 wherein the arrangement of detection layers and overlays on the test strip is covered with an inert flat material in such a manner that a space only remains free that is adequate for sample application in an overlap region of the overlay elements viewed in the direction of the longitudinal axis of the test strip.

48. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 41 wherein the hydrophilicity, transparency and liquid conducting capacity of the overlay material are matched in such a manner that a sample excess is not taken up by the strip.

49-55. (Canceled)

56. (Previously Presented) A test strip comprising a flexible flat support in which one or several test fields are arranged next to one another, said test fields carrying one or several detection layers stacked on top of one another, said test field supporting a monofilament spreading material which is larger than the test field and is attached to the support on both sides of the test field by means of a spacer having the thickness of the test field whereby the part of the spreading material which extends beyond the test field is covered by sample-impermeable material so that a sample application is only possible on that part of the spreading material which rests on the test field, the spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate.

57. (Currently Amended) A test strip comprising a flexible flat support on which one or several test fields are arranged next to one another, said test fields carrying one or several detection layers stacked on top of one another and covered by an overlay made of a spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate, and wherein the test fields are covered by the parts of the overlay elements that can be displaced freely relative to the ~~strip surface~~ test fields.

58. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 57 wherein the hydrophilicity, transparency and liquid conducting capacity of the overlay material are matched in such a manner that a sample excess is not taken up by the strip.

59. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 57 wherein the test strip comprises two single or multilayer test fields for the same or different diagnostically usable analytes, said test fields directly adjoining one another or being separated by a gap.

60. (Previously Presented) The test strip of claim 57 wherein the spreading material comprises 0.01 to 3.0% by weight of N-oleoyl-sarcosinate relative to the weight of the material before impregnation.

61. (New) A test strip comprising a flexible flat support on which one or several test fields are arranged next to one another, wherein said test fields carry one or several detection layers stacked on top of one another, and wherein the test fields are covered two overlay elements whose parts overlap and which can be displaced freely relative to the strip surface face one another when the test strip is bent towards a side on which the overlay is located, said overlay elements made of a spreading material comprising a porous flat structure impregnated with a wetting agent, wherein the wetting agent is N-oleoyl-sarcosinate.

62. (New) The test strip of claim 61 wherein the overlap covers two test fields.